

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 13707

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, UK, US

SUBJECT: MOD MASON'S INVITATION TO SECRETARY
SCHLESINGER

REFS: A) LONDON 12641, B) SECDEF 4858

1. JOHN MAYNE, PARLIAMENTARY PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MASON, CALLED EMBOFF ON 4 SEPTEMBER CONCERNING SECDEF'S PROPOSED VISIT. FOLLOWING POINTS EMERGED: A) BRITISH ARE DELIGHTED THAT SECDEF CAN ACCEPT INVITATION, B) THEY WANT VISIT "TO BE WORTHWHILE", C) THEY ARE VERY CONSCIOUS THAT THEY HAVE ONLY ONE AND ONE-HALF WORKING DAYS INTO WHICH TO FIT THEIR PROPOSED SCHEDULE, AND D) THEY WISH TO SET UP MEETINGS FOR SECDEF WITH SENIOR CABINET MINISTERS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE ONLY TIME AVAILABLE FOR A VISIT TO THE PRIME MINISTER IS ON 24 SEPTEMBER AT 1745 HOURS. NATURALLY, MASON IS HOPEFUL THAT PERHAPS SECDEF'S ITINERARY MIGHT BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE THE PM'S SCHEDULE. IF THIS WERE POSSIBLE THEN BRITISH WOULD PREFER TO SET MEETINGS WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY AND THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER DURING AFTERNOON OF SEPTEMBER 24 RATHER THAN MORNING OF SEPT 26 AS CURRENTLY BEING PLANNED. WITH LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE STARTING ON 29 SEPTEMBER AND FRIDAY TRADITIONALLY BEING "A CONSTITUENCY DAY" MINISTERS WOULD PREFER NOT TO BE "LONDON TIED" ON 26 SEPTEMBER.

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2. THE VISIT SCENARIO PROPOSED FOR 25 SEPTEMBER BY THE MOD RUNS AS FOLLOWS: A) AM. FLY FROM RAF NORTHOLT OR BENSON ON A NIMROD ASW/LRMPA TO VIEW AN ASW ATTACK ON A SUBMARINE WITH A BUCCANEER AIRCRAFT STRIKE. LAND AT RAF KINLOSS MORAY, SCOTLAND, AND LUNCH WITH NIMROD SQUADRON. THEN FLY BY NIMROD TO RAF LUCAS (FIFE) AND HELICOPTER TO ARBROATH (ANGUS), NE OF DUNDEE TO VIEW DEMONSTRATION BY 45TH ROYAL MARINE COMMANDO -- A FRONT LINE UNIT ASSIGNED TO LEFT FLANK OF NATO. RETURN TO LONDON BY NIMROD; B) FRIDAY 26 SEPT AM, TALKS WITH MASON AND MEETINGS WITH SENIOR CABINET MINISTERS AS CAN BE ARRANGED UNLESS 24 SEPT FALLS INTO PLACE. OFFICIAL LUNCHEON AT LANCASTER HOUSE AT 1300 WITH AFTERNOON DEPARTURE FOR GERMANY.

3. THE BRITISH APPEAR TO WANT THE PROPOSED 25 SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE. SINCE IT INVOLVES A FAIRLY EXTENSIVE EFFORT WE HOPE THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S VIEWS CONCERNING THE PROPOSED VISIT ITINERARY CAN BE CONVEYED ASAP.

4. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ARTHUR HOCKADAY, DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLICY AND PROGRAMMES, (AND THE MINISTRY'S "RESIDENT DEFENSE INTELLECTUAL") WILL BE AWAY ON LEAVE. MAYNE HAS PROMISED, HOWEVER, THAT HE WILL GATHER TOGETHER A GROUP OF DEFENSE INTELLECTUALS" SO THAT SECDEF CAN HAVE "USEFUL AND STIMULATING" TALKS.

RICHARDSON

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